



In Transit November/December 2014

A Newsletter for King County Metro Transit Employees



*From the General
Manager's desk*

Transit makes it better—for everyone

On Nov. 4, Seattle voters said yes to the city's Proposition 1, approving a \$60 car tab fee and slight sales tax hike to preserve and improve Metro bus service. Seattle is one of the nation's fastest growing cities, and its voters have long supported improved public transportation. They understand the need for excellent transportation choices.

While this is great news for Seattle, we still face the challenge of making sure our system is able to meet the demands of the entire county.

It might seem obvious to you and me that the benefits of public transit extend beyond our riders and into the community as a whole. But that message can be a tough sell to people—and lawmakers—who don't use our services.

We now have new evidence demonstrating that public transit puts a sizeable dent in traffic congestion in our region, saving all of us time and money—even those who never board a bus. Recent studies provide hard data showing that:

Congestion is getting worse. Along I-5, it held up vehicles by a total of 3 million hours in 2013, up from 1.9 million hours just two years earlier. Along I-90, delay went up by 71 percent.

These delays cost time and money. One new study calculated that delays on state highways cost Washington drivers and businesses \$858 million in 2013 (about \$125 per Washingtonian in 2013 dollars).

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Atlantic Base mechanic Dave Bankson, left, uses the wrecker to lift a disabled bus while Central Base mechanic Walter Olson removes a damaged tire.

Metro's wreckers: always at the ready

Day or night, our wreckers respond to trouble calls and emergencies. They push, pull, lift, or tow, whatever it takes to get buses and traffic moving and Metro's riders to their destinations.

We have single wreckers stationed at each of our outlying bus bases (North, East, and South), but Atlantic Base has two—referred to as Atlantic 1 and Atlantic 2—to support the three Seattle core bases (Ryerson, Central, and Atlantic) and the Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel. These downtown Seattle wreckers and their crews have their work cut out for them, including responding to the needs of a “mature” trolley fleet, diesel buses from two bases, and the unique demands of the tunnel.

The transit tunnel, which accommodates light rail and buses at the same time, presents unique challenges. A disabled bus in the tunnel can cause significant delays unless it's recovered quickly. That's why, while Atlantic 1 may be out on the road, Atlantic 2 is always available to retrieve a disabled bus from the tunnel

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We'll Get You There

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Look Up, Look Out

That intersection nearest your house—do you remember stopping the last time you drove through it? You were probably on auto-pilot and still stopped just fine, even if you can't recall it. We do this a lot. I'll call it "coasting:" we coast during the drive, the walk to and from the bus, etc. And usually things go just fine.

But I've seen enough hard-to-watch videos of thefts and even the rare assaults on buses to notice some common themes. While no amount of cameras, controls, or cops will prevent a criminal from finding a victim, there is one thing we can all control: whether that victim will be ourselves.

I have an iPhone 5s—one of the top three most-sought-after by thieves. This makes me a victim-in-waiting. The police have a name for this all-too-common crime: "apple picking." Wallet in my back pocket? Check. Laptop bag? Yep. I'm ripe for the picking, especially if I'm coasting.

I've talked about situational awareness (SA) before in my column, but its importance can't be overstated. Transit Security and Emergency Management

is preparing to launch a campaign called **Look Up, Look Out** to promote SA among Metro employees.

Nearly every video I've seen of a theft (or assault and theft) featured a victim who was mentally nowhere near the scene of the crime. Head down, earbuds in. Sleeping. Phone up to ear and entire consciousness involved in the call.

Criminals are gamblers at heart. They want the odds stacked in their favor. If you clearly see them, make eye contact, and appear to have control of your person and possessions, you stack the odds in the house's favor. They will likely pass you by. How will you know when you've succeeded in avoiding trouble? You may not, except for this: at the end of every day, when you're still not a victim? Mission accomplished.

— **Mark L. Norton**, Manager
Transit Security and Emergency
Management

Send comments and ideas on Metro security, emergency management, and homeland security to mark.norton@kingcounty.gov.

A peek behind the curtain...at Transit HR

Transit HR has two sections, Human Resources and Labor Relations. Each provides different services and is staffed with employees who have different expertise.

The Human Resources team focuses on the employment side: recruiting and hiring, including workforce planning, outreach, etc.; employment support (workforce development); career advancement; and supporting management on pay, benefits, and workforce policy issues.

The Labor Relations team supports management in contract interpretation and labor contract negotiation, and advises management when needed. This group includes Disability Services, which handles medical and FMLA leave, disability accommodation, and other injury, illness, and disability issues. It also administers Metro's and the county's Drug and Alcohol programs and related policies.

Watch for more peeks behind the HR curtain in future issues. For more information, or to suggest ideas for our next article, email TransitHR@kingcounty.gov or call 206-477-6000.

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General Manager

Everyone can save when people switch to transit. As bad as the congestion delays and costs are, they would be much worse without transit. In 2011, the Seattle-Tacoma-Everett area avoided more than 16 million hours of travel delay and saved a total of \$367 million because of public transportation.

Transit can also save time. Transit travel times stack up well against driving on many major commute corridors. Morning bus trips along I-5 from Federal Way to Seattle average 38 minutes, beating drive-alone trips by 11 minutes.

You can check out a couple of these recent reports by entering their names into your favorite search engine:

- **WSDOT 2014 Corridor Capacity Report** (Oct. 16, 2014)—Our Strategic Planning and Analysis group not only provided data for this annual study, but also worked with WSDOT on ways to better reflect transit trips.
- **Economic Impact of Public Transportation Investment 2014** (May 15, 2014)—This APTA study details the solid benefits of investing in public transportation (example: a \$1 investment in additional public

transportation yields nearly \$4 in benefits over 20 years).

We know the work we do is good for our customers, our community, and our economy. But it's nice to have scientific data that helps show even those who don't use our services why public transit is important to them.

— Kevin Desmond, General Manager



Performance corner

In Motion has lasting impact

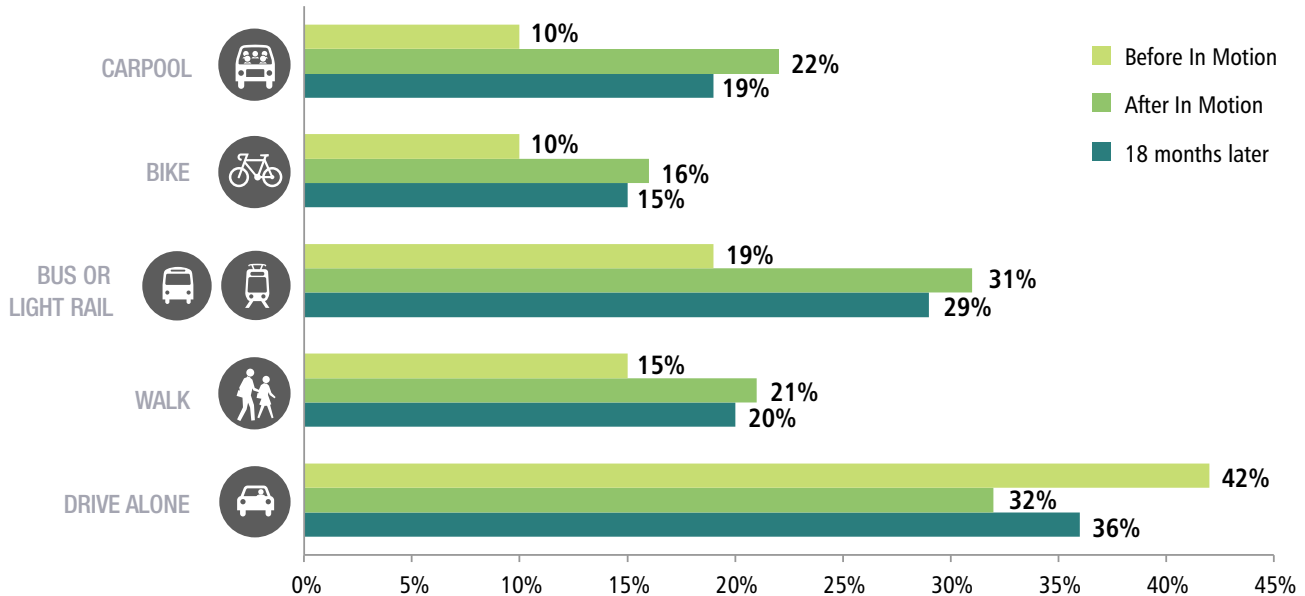
Since 2004, Metro's Market Development and Marketing groups have used the In Motion program to reduce drive-alone trips in targeted parts of our service area. In Motion uses both education and incentives to encourage people to walk, bike, take transit, and share rides more often. Over its first decade, the program has helped nearly 20,000 people in 32 King County neighborhoods increase their use of travel alternatives.

This year, In Motion programs in Burien, Renton, North Seattle, and Shoreline have reached out to

24,000 households. Participants pledged to reduce drive-alone trips by two per week over a 12-week period. We exceeded our 10 percent participation goal with the help of some new initiatives. To increase our social media presence, we used the In Motion Facebook page to hold online competitions between teams and neighborhoods. It worked—the number of people who saw the online posts increased by more than 35,000! We also partnered with Radio Variedades, a local Spanish radio station, to promote In Motion and encourage residents to come to live broadcast events and sign up in person.

In Motion appears to have significantly increased both short- and long-term use of alternatives to driving alone among participants. Right after 2012 programs ended in Ballard and West Seattle, the average percentage of drive-alone trips had gone down in those neighborhoods and the use of all other alternative modes had increased. About 18 months later, a follow-up survey found that 83 percent of respondents continued to drive alone less than they did before the programs, and more than half (55 percent) continued to use ORCA cards—at least weekly for nearly one-third (34 percent).

Responses* by In Motion participants to "How much of your travel around town is by..."



*Among participants who responded to all 3 surveys.

In Transit online

Current and past issues of *In Transit* are available at www.kingcounty.gov/InTransit.

If you have any questions, comments or story ideas, send them to **In Transit**, KSC-TR-0824, or contact **Anna Clemenger**: 206-477-3839 or anna.clemenger@kingcounty.gov.

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We'll Get You There

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KUDOS

IN TRANSIT



VM Rodeo teams were tested on diagnostic skills and teamwork, and also took a written exam. Above (L-R), Larry Fitzpatrick, Ryan Stringfellow, and Arvin Vulliet work on the written test.

■ Mechanics do us proud in

Yakima—With years of experience and several state and international championships to their credit, Metro's team of **Larry Fitzpatrick, Ryan Stringfellow, and Arvin Vulliet** was favored to win the Aug. 17, 2014 VM Rodeo competition in Yakima. Despite an outstanding performance, they were upset by the Intercity Transit team from Olympia/Thurston County and finished in second place. **Bruce Dahl** and **Steve Hunter** served as event judges. This year's Rodeo marked Fitzpatrick's retirement from competition. *In Transit* thanks our three contenders for ably representing Metro over the years.

■ Operator featured in local magazine—

Operator **Theresa Tobin** (Atlantic Base) was featured in the August 2014 *Seattle Met* magazine. Tobin has been driving electric trolley buses for most of her 18 years at Metro, and joked that she could probably drive them with her eyes closed. Read the full article online at www.seattlemet.com (enter "Tobin" in the search window).

■ Apprentice mechanic graduates—

Congratulations to Apprentice Mechanic **John Custer**, who graduated from the Lake Washington Institute of Technology Heavy Duty Diesel program this summer. In addition to the required six-quarter Heavy Duty Diesel Program, Custer completed additional courses and earned a Diesel and Heavy Equipment Technician Associate of Applied Science degree. Custer is now in the third year of Metro's four-year Mechanic Apprenticeship program, and is scheduled to complete the program in July 2016. Program

participants put in long days during the college part of their apprenticeships—starting with classes from 7 a.m. to noon and then reporting to work for a six-hour shift.



Apprentice Mechanic John Custer at work.



Christine O'Claire

O'Claire makes "Top 40 under 40" list

Christina O'Claire, supervisor of strategic planning and analysis (Service Development), was named in September by *Mass Transit* magazine as one of its 2014 "Top 40 under 40."

This list honors transit professionals who made significant contributions to the public transit industry. Nominated by peers, honorees were judged on job commitment, industry involvement and contributions, achievements, and innovation in their field.

O'Claire was cited for "helping King County Metro move into the future through an evolving array of strategic performance and planning initiatives." She is currently working to keep Metro focused on its strategic plan, analyzing and reporting on progress toward the plan's goals and objectives; developing a Community Mobility Contracts program in which local cities partner with Metro to "buy" transit service; establishing Metro's first long-range plan since the mid-1990s; establishing performance metrics for Metro to measure success; and leading Metro's technical team in the development and analysis of data and business process improvements as part of the International Bus Benchmarking Group.

O'Claire credits much of her success to co-workers. "I have an amazing team of professionals that truly care about the quality of service that we deliver," she said. "I am only as good as my team — and I am fortunate to have a wonderful team."

Read the full article online at <http://bit.ly/oclaire-top40>.

Transit operators of the month

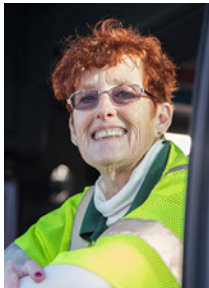
October 2014

Atlantic Base: **Gregory Beiter**
Bellevue Base: **Rickey Dale**
Central Base: **Elmer Monillas**
Eastside Base: **Vincent Rogers**
North Base: **David Stokes**
Ryerson Base: **Kimpinde Wakwesele**
South Base: **Daniel Beyene**

November 2014

Atlantic Base: **Craig Aparton**
Bellevue Base: **Joseph Osborne**
Central Base: **Edward Green**
East Base: **Cheri Meier-Wance**
North Base: **Stanley Lee**
Ryerson Base: **Aaron Benson**
South Base: **Wardell Baldwin**

■ **Transit operator helps save a life** – On Aug. 24, **Morgan Michaels** was returning to her bus after a break when she saw someone doing CPR on a gray-faced, gasping young man with no pulse. Morgan asked a bystander to call 911 and took over doing CPR. At one point, she detected a slight pulse but it stopped again, so she resumed CPR until relieved by emergency responders.



Morgan Michaels put her CPR skills to good use.

After she was back on the road, a coordinator called to tell her that the man was expected to make a full recovery. Morgan said she never expected to need her CPR training, but after this experience she advises others to take a class or a refresher because CPR has changed a bit—and it just might come in handy when you least expect it.

■ **Another happy customer**—A customer recently contacted us after riding Metro for the first time. “I drive everywhere,” he wrote, but when he was summoned to jury duty, a bus pass was included in the mailer he received. He decided to give us a try, and was pleasantly surprised at how efficiently we got him where he needed to be—and the friendliness and helpfulness of the staff members he encountered. “My experience was over-the-top great,” he said. “I have spread the word

to many of my friends to say how extremely impressed I am with your overall product. Thank you for the extremely pleasant surprise.”

■ **Metro meets workers comp goal**—We recently met an important goal when we successfully placed 100 percent of our injured employees in transitional duty assignments. These assignments allow injured employees to gain new skills and perspectives on the organization while doing important work and keeping themselves engaged in the workplace. A 100 percent placement of injured workers is a recognized best practice in the workers compensation industry.

Service awards

***Correction:** The September/October 2014 issue of In Transit incorrectly identified the 35 and 40-year service award period as the second quarter of 2014. The correct period was the third/fourth quarter of 2014.*

The following employees achieved major service milestones in the fourth quarter of 2014:



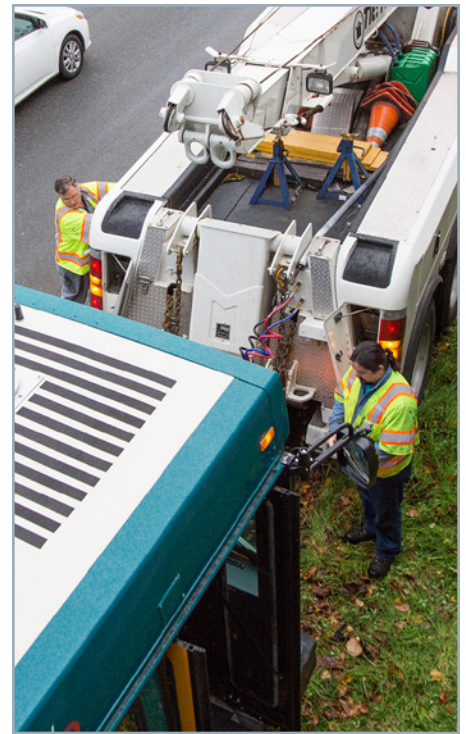
Operations:

S.A. Bishop, Merch DeGrasse, Gerhard

Dueck, Janet Guthrie, Michail Hacker, Jerry Jacobs, Booker McKinion, Linda Walker.

Vehicle Maintenance:

Jesse Parrott, Mark Peterson.



Atlantic Base Mechanics Dave Bankson, left, and Michael Siplivy come to the aid of a bus on an on-ramp to SR-520.

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Wreckers at the ready

so both rail and other buses can keep going.

It takes patience and skill to tow a 60-foot bus through crowded streets during rush hour. Our wrecker mechanics are up to the challenge and take pride in their work. They also take pride in their trucks, making sure they are clean, well-maintained, and stocked with recovery equipment and parts for on-the-road bus repairs.

All of our wrecker crews have received numerous and well-deserved commendations for their outstanding work and dedication to safety. Whether it means spending long hours in freezing temperatures on icy hills or changing a tire on the side of a busy freeway, they get the job done.

SHORT SHOTS IN TRANSIT

News briefs in and around the Transit Division



Rideshare Operations staff members prepare to start swapping vans (left to right: Jim Carpenter, Roger Bruckshen, Keith Williams, Trishah Bull, Diane Davis, Cindy Hudson, Julie Paone, and William McCoy).

■ **Vanpool swap day**—Aug. 14 was a gray day at the Van Distribution Center in Redmond, but members of 81 vanpool groups were smiling brightly as they traded in vans that were at their “end of life” and drove off in brand new 2014 Dodge Grand Caravans. Rideshare Operations organized an efficient flow of vans and paperwork for two action-packed swap days, completing a rollout of 178 replacement vans this year.

■ **New app helps blind riders**—Anyone can have trouble finding a bus stop they’ve never used, and it’s even tougher if you’re blind or have low vision. So researchers from the UW Department of Computer Science, with help from **Matthew Weidner** (Accessible Services), developed an extension of the popular OneBusAway service called StopInfo. Presently available only for iPhones or via the OneBusAway website, StopInfo provides details about Metro bus stops, including the stop’s position relative to the intersection, the type of sign that marks the stop,

and whether the stop has shelters, benches, and lighting. Metro provided basic information from our facilities database, and users are encouraged to add corrections or missing details. Through Dec. 15, users who create a StopInfo account or become top contributors will get free bus tickets.

■ **Safety provides “photo feedback”**—Safety officer **Scott Beasley** and Service Quality Chief **Paul Rodgers** recently reviewed five months’ worth of accident reports and photos and gave constructive feedback to the first-line supervisors who had documented each accident. Suggestions included how to clearly show details such as what the operator saw, overall scene information, intersection signals, damage at the scene, and what was revealed after vehicles were separated. First-line supervisors were already doing a good job of documenting accidents overall, but adding one or two key photos gives Transit Safety and Risk Management a better picture of what happened. First-line supervisors

have taken the feedback to heart, and Risk Management reports a marked improvement in photo quality that has helped them evaluate and handle claims against Metro.

■ **Update your info**—Transit Human Resources reminds us that W-2s will be mailed out in mid-January, so now is a great time to make sure your address is up to date in PeopleSoft. While you’re at it, check to see if your phone number, email address, and emergency contacts need updating too. Access the new PeopleSoft site online at www.kingcounty.gov/employees (find the link under “Benefits”). After you log in, click My Personal Information to see what’s on file for you and make any changes. For help, contact the KCIT Service Center at 206-263-HELP (4357).

■ **ORCA to Go outreach**—During the week of Sept. 8, ORCA To Go staff members did outreach at seven locations: the Ballard Senior Center, the Highline Senior Center, the VA Hospital, Harborview Medical Center, Green River Community College, the TOP program in the Kent School District, and the Realistic Transition Program in the Highline School District (twice)! They helped almost 250 customers reload value on ORCA cards or obtain Regional Reduced Fare Permits, and collected over \$8,500.

■ **Santa’s lights tour**—Santa will take time out from his busy schedule at the North Pole for a three-hour tour of Seattle’s best Christmas lights on a vintage Metro bus. Join the fun on Saturday, Dec. 13. Buses will depart from Second Avenue S and S Main Street at 7 p.m.



Los Gatos entertains while Service Development staffers sell Vietnamese sandwiches to benefit Northwest Harvest.

■ **Employee Giving Campaign got entertaining**—Metro employees put on many special events to benefit the 2014 Employee Giving Campaign, which ran from Sept. 24 to Nov. 21. Most involved food or entertainment—and some involved both. **Dale**

Cummings (Service Development) again organized a series of noon-hour concerts in the King Street Center lobby, including Gaelic/Scottish favorites with Highland dance, old timey music, a barbershop quartet, traditional and modern Mexican tunes

(along with a Vietnamese sandwich sale), original guitar/vocal music with a bake sale, and acoustic folk rock. How much more fun can giving become?

■ **Seeing green bikes?**—On Oct. 13, the nonprofit Pronto Cycle Share began serving Seattle with 50 kiosks offering a total of 500 bright green bikes in the University District, South Lake Union, Belltown, Uptown, downtown Seattle, and Capitol Hill. With an annual membership (\$85), a 24-hour pass (\$8), or a three-day pass (\$16), you can check out a bike, use it, and return it to a kiosk within 30 minutes without incurring any additional charge. The average bike share trip is expected to be around 22 minutes. Metro's bus bike racks accommodate Pronto bikes, and the King County Employee Transportation Program is working with Pronto to offer a membership discount for county employees. Learn more about Pronto at www.prontocycleshare.com.

New electric trolley prototypes are here

On Friday, Nov. 7, employees and county councilmembers got a chance to check out one of our New Flyer prototype electric trolleys outside the King Street Center. Metro is testing two 40-foot trolleys on Seattle city streets. This testing will last about three months, and will allow us to identify any minor adjustments we may need before full production and delivery of our new fleet of 40-foot trolleys, scheduled to begin next summer. We'll begin testing a 60-foot trolley next spring, and plan to put these into service the following year.

The new trolleys will be able to operate off-wire for several miles, which will allow them to move around collisions and reduce the need to substitute diesel buses during construction.



PHOTOS BY ADAM JEFFERSON



ON THE MOVE

Transit Division retirements, promotions/job changes, new hires, and remembrances

Retirements

Operations

Ruthic Allen, superintendent of service quality – October 10; 37 years

Robert “Andy” Cilley, transit operator (South Base) – September 25; 12 years

Jack Hori, transit operator (South Base) – September 27; 11 years

Power and Facilities

Durwood Moore, utility line worker – September 30; 10 years

Vehicle Maintenance

Donald Henkel, transit mechanic-lead (Bellevue) – September 30; 24+ years

Donovan O’Brien, transit electronic technician-lead (Electric Shop) – October 10; 24+ years

Paula Smail, transit chief (South) – October 1; 24+ years

Promotions and Job Changes

General Manager’s Office

Doug Hodson to finance and administration manager/funding strategist (Department of Natural Resources and Parks)

Operations

Ramona Dudley-Moore, base chief, to East Base from South Base

Jeff Garland to acting base chief (South Base) from first-line supervisor

Paratransit/Rideshare Operations

Trishah Bull, rideshare services representative (Rideshare Operations), to real property agent III (Department of Natural Resources and Parks)

Power and Facilities

Daren Bassen to facilities chief from refurbishment carpenter-lead (Facilities)

Troy Jaeger to acting refurbishment carpenter-lead from facilities constructor (Facilities)

Dave Martin to line material worker from line material helper (Power)

Rail

John Dibble to rail operator-trainee (Link) from transit operator

Bruce Holmes to rail operator-trainee (Link) from transit operator

Prashant Vishnu Kumar to rail operator-trainee (Link) from transit operator

Osma Said to rail operator-trainee (Link) from transit operator

Norman Steward to rail operator-trainee (Link) from transit operator

Darlene Watson to rail operator-trainee (Link) from transit operator

Service Development

Wesley Cain to acting senior transit schedule planner (Scheduling) from transit base dispatch/planner

Vehicle Maintenance

Kurtis Bennett to acting transit parts specialist from equipment service worker (Ryerson)

Mike Brown to transit chief (South) from lead mechanic (East)

Zac Drenkel to transit maintenance analyst (Fleet) from lead mechanic (Ryerson)

Brian Fraga to acting transit parts specialist from utility service worker (Ryerson)

Louise Haworth to acting transit parts specialist from utility service worker (Central)

James Jones to acting transit parts specialist from equipment service worker (South)

Sheri Keelan to transit accounting specialist II (Transit Fleet Contract Management) from acting data administrator (Component Supply Center)

New Hires

Power and Facilities

Mikael Kennedy, building operating engineer – September 24

Armando Montez, building operating engineer – August 11

Rail

Guy Dadjé, lead rail facilities custodian – October 16

Melda Hickman, transit chief - rail traction power (Link) – March 10

Service Development

Alex Kiheri, engineer III (Transit Signal Priority) – November 12

Vehicle Maintenance

Robert Caldwell, work co-op student/intern II (Central) – October 13

Xander Notenboom, intern II (South) – October 13

Charles Williamson, intern II (East) – October 13